1. **APPLICATION SITE AND LOCALITY** 
   1. The application site is an agricultural holding located to the south east of the village of Wendlebury. The site is accessed from a hard surfaced track between The Willows and Ploughmans Cottage on Main Street in Wendlebury.
   2. The application site is located to the west of the main farm house and complex of buildings and consists of a partly open fronted agricultural building used for winter housing of cattle and an open fronted barn used for hay storage to the south of this.
2. **DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**
   1. The current application seeks permission to construct a new area of hard standing around the agricultural buildings. This would allow for a hard surfaced access to be provided to the west of the building accommodating cattle and provide access to the building storing hay without going through the cattle building. The area would be laid to concrete with an area of hard standing to the south of the building. The area would be used for storage of animal feed and manoeuvring space for vehicles.
3. **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**
4. There is no planning history relevant to the current application.
5. **PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS**
6. No pre-application discussions have taken place with regard to this proposal.
7. **RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY**
   1. This application has been publicised by way of a site notice displayed near the site.
   2. No comments have been raised by third parties.
8. **RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION**
   1. Below is a summary of the consultation responses received at the time of writing this report. Responses are available to view in full on the Council’s website, via the online Planning Register.

PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL

* 1. WENDLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL: **No objections.**

STATUTORY CONSULTEES

* 1. HIGHWAYS: **No objections.**

NON-STATUTORY CONSULTEES

* 1. LANDSCAPE OFFICER: **No objections.** The proposal will be of limited impact. Farm vehicles and associated storage will be seen in the context of the farm buildings.

1. **RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE**
2. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
3. The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 - Part 1 was formally adopted by Cherwell District Council on 20th July 2015 and provides the strategic planning policy framework for the District to 2031.  The Local Plan 2011-2031 – Part 1 replaced a number of the ‘saved’ policies of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 though many of its policies are retained and remain part of the development plan. The relevant planning policies of Cherwell District’s statutory Development Plan are set out below:

CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 2011 - 2031 PART 1 (CLP 2031 Part 1)

* PSD1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
* ESD10 – Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment
* ESD13 – Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement
* ESD15 - The Character of the Built and Historic Environment

CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 1996 SAVED POLICIES (CLP 1996)

* AG2 – Construction of Farm Buildings

1. Other Material Planning Considerations

* National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
* Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

1. **APPRAISAL**
2. The key issues for consideration in this case are:

* Principle of development
* Impact on the character of the area
* Other matters

Principle of development

1. Chapter 3 of the NPPF seeks to support economic development in rural areas including the development of agriculture. The farm is an established agricultural business and the proposed new hard standing would aid the efficient operation of the farm by allowing better access to the buildings and allowing an area for storage. The Design and Access Statement notes that the proposal would also form part of the plans to allow expansion of the cattle herd. Given the above there is considered to be a requirement for the development to help in the efficient operation of the farm. Therefore the principle of the development is considered acceptable subject to further considerations in terms landscape, visual impact and highway safety discussed further below.

Impact on character and appearance of locality

1. Policy ESD13 of the CLP 2031 states that development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. It goes onto state that proposals will not be permitted if they would result in undue visual intrusion into the open countryside or would harm the setting of settlements. Policy ESD15 of the CLP 2031 further reinforces this view, in that new development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design.
2. Saved Policy AG2 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 indicates that farm buildings and associated development requiring planning permission should normally be so sited that they do not intrude into the landscape or into residential areas. The NPPF seeks to ensure the planning system recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
3. The proposed hard standing would be located around existing farm buildings and would be seen in the context of these buildings and existing operations of the farm. The proposed hard standing would be finished at the same level as the existing concrete area to the rear of the barn. The landscape in the locality is relatively flat and therefore views of the proposal will be limited in the wider area and largely screened by planting around the existing field boundaries. The impact on the wider landscape will therefore be limited. Furthermore the hard standing would be seen in the context of the existing agricultural buildings and would not appear as an alien feature in the landscape. Overall the visual impact is therefore considered to be acceptable.

Other matters

1. The proposed area of land where the hard standing would be situated is currently used for grazing and outdoor storage for the farming enterprise. The area is not considered to contain any significant ecological value and the proposal would not lead to the loss of any trees or hedges. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in this regard.
2. The County Highway Engineer has been consulted and has raised no objection to the application and the area is likely to be used by the farm on an informal basis. The existing access to the site will not be affected.
3. The site is not located in a flood risk area and the applicant has stated that it does not have a history of flooding. The proposed run off from the hard standing would likely drain onto the adjacent agricultural field and there is no evidence that it would result in flooding.
4. The site is some distance from the nearest neighbouring properties and given this distance it is not considered that the proposal would be harmful to their residential amenity.
5. **CONCLUSION**
6. The proposed development would help improve the functioning of the farm operation and would support its growth. The site is relatively well visually contained and there would therefore be limited impact on the landscape. There are not considered to be any significant impacts on ecology, flooding or neighbouring amenity. It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to condition.

|  |
| --- |
| 1. **RECOMMENDATION**    1. That permission is granted, subject to the following conditions:   1 The development to which this permission relates shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.  Reason - To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.  2 Except where otherwise stipulated by condition, the development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the following plans and documents: Application Forms, Design and Access Statement and Drawing number 17.163.01 submitted with the application.  Reason - For the avoidance of doubt, to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority and to comply with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| CASE OFFICER: James Kirkham | DATE: 02 March 2017 |
| CHECKED BY: Alex Keen | DATE: 07 March 2017 |